

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA**

ABIGALE PFINGSTEN and ANOKHY
DESAI *on behalf of themselves and all
others similarly situated,*

Plaintiffs,

v.

CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY,

Defendant.

Case No. 2:20-CV-00716-RJC

**DECLARATION OF STEPHANIE M.
VALERIO REGARDING NOTICE
ADMINISTRATION**

1. My name is Stephanie M. Valerio, and I am over the age of eighteen (18) years. I make this declaration under the penalty of perjury, free and voluntarily, under no coercion, threat, or intimidation, and without promise of benefit or reward, based on my own personal knowledge. If called to testify, I could and would testify consistent with the matters stated herein.

2. I am an Assistant Project Manager for RG/2 Claims Administration LLC (“RG/2 Claims”), whose address is 30 South 17th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103. RG/2 Claims is the independent third-party settlement administrator seeking to be appointed by the Court as Settlement Administrator to handle various settlement administration activities in the above-referenced matter, including, but not limited to, mailing of settlement notification packages to Class Members, Election Form collection and review, class member correspondence, and distribution.

3. RG/2 is a full-service class action settlement administrator offering notice, claims processing, allocation, distribution, tax reporting, and class action settlement consulting services. RG/2 Claims’ experience includes the provision of notice and administration services for settlements arising from antitrust, data security breach, consumer, civil rights, employment, negligent disclosure, and securities fraud allegations. Since 2000, RG/2 Claims has administered

and distributed in excess of \$2 billion in class action settlement proceeds. A profile of RG/2's background and capabilities are attached hereto as **Exhibit A**.

4. In consultation with Class Counsel, I prepared a proposed notice and administration plan for this litigation. This Declaration will describe the proposed notice plan ("Notice Plan") and how it will meet the requirements of Rule 23 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure ("Rule 23") and provide due process to the potential Settlement Class Members. This Declaration is based upon my personal knowledge and upon information provided to me by Class Counsel, my associates, and RG/2 Claims staff members.

5. I have personal knowledge of the matters set forth in this declaration and, if called as a witness, could and would testify competently thereto.

6. The objective of the suggested Notice program is to provide the best notice practicable—Rule 23-compliant notice—to those members of the Class.

7. Within 10 days of Class Counsel filing for Preliminary Approval, RG/2 Claims will provide notice to relevant state and federal attorneys general in compliance with the Class Action Fairness Act.

8. RG/2 Claims proposes a notice program with the following elements:

- a. Direct notice via email (where available) or U.S. Mail (where email is not available) to the class members identified from Defendant's records, consisting of all Carnegie Mellon University students who were assessed tuition and/or fees to attend at least one in-person course(s) during the Spring 2020 semester at CMU but had their course(s) moved to remote learning (the "Class").
- b. The Notice and other important court documents relevant to the Class Notice and the litigation in general will be made available on a case specific website designated for this action. The website will provide, in downloadable format, the following: (i) the Long-Form Notice; (ii) the Election Form (iii) the Preliminary

Approval Order; (iv) the Settlement Agreement (including all exhibits); (v) a question and-answer section agreed to in good faith by the Parties to anticipate and answer Settlement related questions from potential Settlement Class Members; (vi) contact information for the Claims Administrator, including the toll-free number, as well as for Class Counsel; (vii) all preliminary and final approval motions filed by the Parties, and any orders ruling on such motions. Additionally, RG/2 Claims will maintain a toll-free number to answer and address any class member inquiries. The toll-free telephone number will appear in the Short-Form and Long-Form Notices.

9. The proposed notice plan provides the best practicable method to reach the potential class members and is consistent with other class action notice plans that have been approved by various federal courts for similarly situated matters.

10. All undeliverable mail will be sorted and scanned. For returned notices without a forwarding address, RG/2 Claims will use Accurant (a division of Lexis-Nexis) to perform a basic “skip trace” search in order to retrieve the most accurate and updated information. The database will be updated with any new address found and the Notice will be re-mailed to the updated addresses.

11. RG/2 Claims believes the notice program described above is suitable for this case and is comparable to plans other federal courts have approved for similar cases. RG/2 Claims also believes that the Notice is drafted in the “plain language” format preferred by federal courts and provides the information required by Rule 23. RG/2 Claims believes that the Notice is understandable for members of the Class and complies with due process.

I DECLARE UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY UNDER THE LAWS OF THE UNITED STATES THAT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE THE FOREGOING IS TRUE AND CORRECT.

Executed on February 13, 2025 at Philadelphia, PA

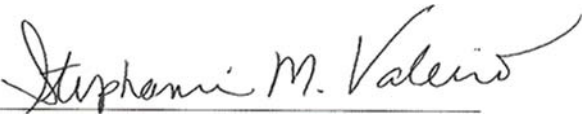
By: 
Stephanie M. Valerio, Declarant

EXHIBIT A



SETTING A NEW STANDARD IN CLASS ACTION CLAIMS ADMINISTRATION

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Class Action Experience

High-Quality Service at Competitive Rates

RG/2 Claims seasoned professionals utilize their vast class action experience, tax and financial management resources to deliver high-quality service at competitive rates.

RG/2 Claims is a boutique class action claims administration firm with a nationwide presence founded by seasoned class action practitioners and highly credentialed tax professionals. Our leadership team has a collective 100 years' experience working in the field of class action litigation and settlement administration to leverage for the benefit of counsel. Our team of driven class action attorneys, *highly credentialed CPAs and forensic accountants* approach each matter with a personal goal to shepherd the settlement through the process from settlement negotiations through final approval. Our personal attention and care ensures that the administration is handled in a seamless matter that allows counsel to proceed with the knowledge and confidence that their settlement will receive the attention and care that they demand. In addition, our operations and IT personnel bring individualized innovations to each engagement, driving the notice and settlement administration to conclusion. We have the experience to handle large settlements with the personal attention and care expected from a boutique firm.

RG/2 Claims recognizes that cutting-edge technology is the key to efficient and reliable claim processing. Our IT Group, including an experienced web design team, enables RG/2 Claims to employ technologies used to enhance accuracy, efficiency and interaction of all participants in the claims process. Our approach focuses on analysis of case needs, development of solutions to maximize resources and reduce costs through accurate and efficient data collection and entry, and ongoing maintenance and support. Throughout the entire claims process, our goal is to (1) optimize completeness, accuracy and efficiency of the data management system, including online integration; (2) validate critical fields and data; and (3) track opt-outs and claimant responses. RG/2 Claims' proprietary database application provides a *single source for managing the entire claims administration process and expediting decision making and resource management*. From the initial mailing through distribution of settlement funds and reconciliation of distributed payments, RG/2 Claims' CLEVerPay® system centralizes data, facilitating information sharing and efficient communication.



Cutting-Edge Technology and Skilled Resources

The CLEVerPay® System: A proprietary and revolutionary application developed exclusively by RG/2 Claims.

At RG/2 Claims, we developed a proprietary and customizable database with the goal of providing single-source management throughout the claims administration process, expediting decision making and resource management.

From the initial mailing through distribution of settlement funds and reconciliation of payments, RG/2 Claims' CLEVerPay® system centralizes the entire process while providing information sharing and communications solutions.

Our CLEVerPay® system is a robust and user-friendly resource that can be easily customized to meet your administration and distribution needs. We recognize how essential it is for data to be clean, centralized and readily accessible. RG/2 Claims' CLEVerPay® system has the capacity to assimilate and analyze large amounts of raw data from multiple inputs, to convert that raw data into useful information and to distribute the useful information in a variety of formats.

The integration of these elements results in timely and accurate distribution of secure payments generated from RG/2 Claims' single-source CLEVerPay® system.

For more information, please visit our website to download our CLEVerPay® System Datasheet at: <http://www.rg2claims.com/pdf/cleverPayDatasheet.pdf>.

Experienced Professionals Always There When You Need Us

RG/2 Claims principals have hands-on experience in both class action practice and settlement administration. Our combined access to resources and institutions allows us to deliver superior value-added service in all aspects of settlement administration.



GRANT RAWDIN, Esq., CFP®, CEO and co-founder, is an attorney, an accountant and a Certified Financial Planner™ practitioner. *Worth* magazine named him one of the “Best Financial Advisors in America.” Mr. Rawdin’s professional background includes more than 25 years of legal and accounting experience focused in tax, business, investment analysis, legal claims and class action settlement administration. Mr. Rawdin has a juris doctor degree from Temple University Beasley School of Law and a B.A. in English from Temple University, and he is admitted to practice law in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

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MICHAEL A. GILLEN, CPA, CFE, CFF, President and co-founder, has more than 25 years of experience in many facets of litigation consulting services, with particular emphasis on criminal and civil controversies, damage measurement, fraud and embezzlement detection, forensic and investigative accounting, legal claims and class action settlement administration and taxation. He assists numerous attorneys and law firms in a variety of litigation matters. Mr. Gillen graduated from La Salle University with a B.S. in Accounting.

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MICHAEL J. LEE, CFA, COO, the chief architect of our proprietary CLEVerPay® system is a Chartered Financial Analyst with extensive experience in litigation consulting services, including damage assessment, measurement, evaluation, legal claims and class action settlement administration. Additionally, Mr. Lee has about a decade of experience in the financial services industry, with particular emphasis on securities valuation, securities research and analysis, investment management policies and procedures, compliance investigations and portfolio management in global equity markets. Mr. Lee has a B.S. in Business Administration with a dual major in Finance and Management from La Salle University and an M.B.A. in Finance from the NYU Stern School of Business.

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MELISSA BALDWIN, Director of Claims Administration—Employment and Consumer, has over 18 years of experience in the administration of class action matters, with focuses on project management, client communication, notice coordination, claims processing and auditing, and distribution in the class action practice areas of antitrust, consumer and labor and employment. As Notice and Correspondence Coordinator, Ms. Baldwin assisted in the administration of an antitrust matter involving nine defendant banks, which included over 47 million class members and the subsequent distribution of the \$330 million Settlement Fund to the valid class members. Ms. Baldwin has a B.S. in Business Administration from Drexel University.

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TINA M. CHIANGO, Director of Claims Administration—Securities and Antitrust, has over 20 years of experience in the administration of class action matters. Ms. Chiango focuses on project management; this includes establishing procedures and case workflow, client communications, notice coordination, overseeing the processing and auditing of claims, distribution to the class and preparing reports and filings for the court. Over the last 20 years, Ms. Chiango has worked on a broad spectrum of class action settlements including securities, antitrust, consumer and mass tort, among others. Ms. Chiango has a B.S. in Business Administration with a major in Accounting from Drexel University.

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WILLIAM W. WICKERSHAM, Esq., Senior Vice President, Business Development and Client Relations, focuses his practice on assisting clients in navigation of the claims administration process from pre-settlement consultation through disbursement in all class action practice areas, including, but not limited to, antitrust, consumer, labor and employment, and securities. As a seasoned director of client relations, he advises counsel on settlement administration plans and manages many large and complex class action settlements. Mr. Wickersham has also appeared in federal court on several occasions to successfully support counsel in the settlement approval process including complex securities, environmental and wage and hour matters. As a former securities class action attorney, he brings over a decade's worth of experience in the class action bar as a litigator and as a claims administrator. As a litigator, Mr. Wickersham was involved in several high profile litigations which resulted in recoveries for investors totaling over \$2.5 billion. Mr. Wickersham has a juris doctor degree from Fordham University School of Law, a B.A. from Skidmore College and is admitted to practice law in New York.

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CHRISTOPHER J. TUCCI, Esq., Vice President, Business Development and Client Relations, focuses on guiding clients through the class action claims administration process from pre-settlement consultation to innovative notice campaigns, to quality and cost-effective administration, to the ultimate distribution of funds. He advises clients on the administrative solutions for consumer, employment, securities, and antitrust class action. Mr. Tucci is recognized as an expert in the financial services legal community and is a sought after national speaker on litigation management, financial services laws, data security breaches, corporate investigations, and in-house counsel best practices. As a former senior in-house litigator for nearly two decades, he has extensive experience managing litigation for global financial services corporations, including dozens of securities, wage & hour, and consumer class actions matters. Mr. Tucci brings a unique perspective to class action matters with his deep practical experience in the management of litigation including selecting and managing outside counsel, handling internal investigations, communicating with state and federal regulators, and managing litigation from inception through settlement or dismissal. Mr. Tucci has a juris doctor degree from Widener University School of Law, a B.A. from the University of Delaware, and is admitted to practice in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

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Locations



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ATLANTA

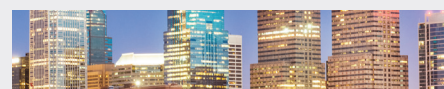
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SAN FRANCISCO

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P 415.957.3011 • F 415.957.3090



Full Life-Cycle Support for Your Class Action With You Every Step of the Way

Whether engaged as a court-appointed settlement administrator, claims agent or disbursing agent, RG/2 Claims offers a complete range of claims, settlement administration and investment management services, including but not limited to:

PROFESSIONAL CASE MANAGEMENT CONSULTING

RG/2 Claims provides custom pre-settlement consultation and highly personalized attention throughout the life cycle of settlement administration. Each retention begins with an in-depth consultation concerning the specific needs of the case. Our professionals routinely and proactively identify administrative concerns and identify and propose solutions that avoid delay and remove unpredictability from the equation. We work through a coordinated approach involving a core of specialists that are intimately familiar with the case entrusted to our care. Our retentions result in effective and efficient solutions and greater peace of mind for busy lawyers.

NOTIFICATION PLANNING AND CAMPAIGNS

Whether routine or innovative, RG/2 Claims designs cost-effective and thorough notification plans that will suit your budget whether the settlement is national in scope or highly localized. RG/2 Claims guides you through the array of notice publication options at your disposal in a variety of media formats.

WEBSITE DESIGN

RG/2 Claims can assist in the design and hosting of a website specific to the client's needs to allow for document posting, as well as pertinent information and deadlines about the case. RG/2 Claims can also provide various options for claims filing, which includes an online portal that allows claimants to submit their claims and supporting documentation through the website.

CLAIMS PROCESSING

RG/2 Claims utilizes a proprietary and customizable database that provides a single-source management tool throughout the claims administration process, expediting decision making and resource management. RG/2 Claims' proprietary and sophisticated CLEVerPay® system centralizes the entire process while providing information sharing and communications solutions, from the initial mailing through distribution of settlement funds and reconciliation of payments.

DISTRIBUTION AND TAX SERVICES

RG/2 Claims' in-house tax, accounting and financial services professionals provide disbursement services, including management of checking, sweep, escrow and related cash accounts, as well as non-cash assets, such as credits, gift cards, warrants and stock certificates. RG/2 Claims' in-house CPAs provide a broad array of accounting services, including securing private letter rulings from the IRS regarding the tax reporting consequences of settlement payments, the preparation of settlement fund tax returns and the preparation and issuance of IRS Forms 1099 and W-2.

Range of Services

Offering Unparalleled Value

RG/2 offers a range of quality value-added services for your class action administration.

SECURITIES

RG/2 Claims' highly experienced team uses its various resources to locate beneficial holders of securities, including working with the Depository Trust Company and a proprietary list of nominee firms to identify and mail notices to the class. With RG/2 Claims' CLEVerPay system, claims are processed efficiently and accurately using our proprietary damage grid that calculates class member damages in accordance with a broad array of complex plans of allocation. Claims are automatically flagged through a validation process so RG/2 Claims can communicate with class members concerning their claims and can assist them in filing claims that are complete and properly documented. Once ready for distribution, RG/2 Claims conducts an audit of the claims to insure against calculation errors and possible fraudulent claims. Once the audit is completed, RG/2 Claims calculates distribution amounts for eligible class members in accordance with the plan of allocation and issues checks and any applicable tax documents. RG/2 Claims is also often called upon to act as the Escrow Agent for the Settlement Fund, investing the funds and filing all required tax returns.

ANTITRUST

Because of the high-dollar settlements involved in most antitrust cases and potential large recoveries on behalf of class members, RG/2 Claims understands the importance of accuracy and attention to detail for these cases. RG/2 Claims works with counsel to arrive at the best possible plan to provide notice to the class. With RG/2 Claims' CLEVerPay system, claims filed with a large volume of data, which is common in an antitrust case, can be quickly and easily uploaded into our database for proper auditing. Our highly-trained staff consults with counsel to apply an audit plan to process claims in an efficient manner while ensuring that all claims meet class guidelines. Once ready for distribution, RG/2 Claims calculates check amounts for eligible class members in accordance with the plan of allocation and will issue checks (including wire transfers for large distributions) as well as any necessary tax documents. RG/2 Claims is also available to act as the Escrow Agent for the Settlement Fund, investing the funds and filing all required tax returns.

EMPLOYMENT

With an experienced team of attorneys, CPAs, damage experts and settlement administrators, RG/2 Claims handles all aspects of complex employment settlements, including collective actions, FLSA, gender discrimination, wage-and-hour and, in particular, California state court class and PAGA settlements. RG/2 Claims utilizes technological solutions to securely receive and store class data, parse data for applicable employment information, personalize consents forms or claim forms, collect consents or claims electronically, calculate settlement amounts and make payments through our proprietary CLEVerPay system. Our proprietary database also allows for up-to-the-minute statistical reporting for returned mail, consents or claims received and exclusions submitted. Our CPAs concentrate on withholding and payroll issues and IRC section 468(B) compliance and reporting. Customizable case-specific websites allow for online notification and claims filing capabilities. With Spanish/English bilingual call center representatives on-staff, class members are provided immediate attention to their needs.

CONSUMER

RG/2 Claims handles a wide range of complex consumer matters with notice dissemination to millions of class members and with settlements involving cash, coupons, credits and gift cards. Our experienced claims administrators are available to provide guidance on media, notice and distribution plans that are compliant with the Class Action Fairness Act and the state federal rules governing notice, and that are most beneficial to the class. Our proprietary CLEVerPay system provides a secure and efficient way to track class member data, claims and payments. Integrated with our database, we can provide a user-friendly claims filing portal that will allow class members to complete a static claim form or log-in using user-specific credentials to view and submit a claim personalized just for that user. A similar online portal can be provided as a highly cost-effective method for distribution where the class member can log in to obtain coupons, vouchers or credits as their settlement award.

Effective administration requires proactive planning and precise execution. Before we undertake any matter, we work with you to develop a specific plan for the administration of your case. The service plan is comprehensive, complete and tailored to your specific needs.

RG/2 CLAIMS PROVIDES THE SERVICES SUMMARIZED BELOW:

- Technical consultation during formulation of settlement agreement, including data collection criteria and tax consequences
- Design and development of notice and administration plan, including claim form design and layout
- Claim form and notice printing and mailing services
- Dedicated claimant email address with monitoring and reply service
- Calculation and allocation of class member payments
- Claim form follow-up, including issuing notices to deficient and rejected claims
- Mail forwarding
- Claimant locator services
- Live phone support for claimant inquiries and requests
- Claim form processing
- Claim form review and audit
- Check printing and issuance
- Design and hosting of website access portals
- Online claim receipt confirmation portal
- Ongoing technical consultation throughout the life cycle of the case
- Check and claim form replacement upon request

WE ALSO PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING OPTIONAL SERVICES:

- Periodic status reporting
- Customized rapid reporting on demand
- Issue reminder postcards
- Consultation on damage analyses, calculation and valuation
- Interpretation of raw data to conform to plan of allocation
- Issue claim receipt notification postcards
- Online portal to provide claims forms, status and contact information
- Dedicated toll-free claimant assistance line
- Evaluation and determination of claimant disputes
- Opt-out/Objection processing
- Notice translation
- Integrated notice campaigns, including broadcast, print and e-campaigns
- Pre-paid claim return mail envelope service
- Web-based claim filing
- 24/7 call center support
- Damage measurement and development of an equitable plan of allocation

WE ALSO PROVIDE CALCULATION AND WITHHOLDING OF ALL REQUIRED FEDERAL AND STATE TAX PAYMENTS, INCLUDING:

- Individual class member payments
- Qualified Settlement Fund (QSF) tax filings
- Employment tax filings and remittance
- Generation and issuance of W-2s and 1099s
- Integrated reporting and remittance services, as well as client-friendly data reports for self-filing

**Don't see the service you are looking for?
Ask us. We will make it happen.**



FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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**BOUTIQUE ADMINISTRATOR WITH
WORLD-CLASS CAPABILITIES**

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